

REMARKS

Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 5, 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Shibuya (U.S. 2002/010117).

Claims 2-4, 6-8 and 11-16 are objected to as being depend upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Drawings

It is noted that the Examiner has accepted the drawings as filed on February 22, 2004. However, since the drawings were originally filed with the Application on February 11, 2004 and nothing was filed for the subject Application on February 22, 2004, it is assumed that the Examiner intended to accept the drawings as originally filed with this Application.

Claim Amendments

By this amendment, Applicant has canceled claims 1, 5, 9, and 10 and amended claims 2, 6, 11, 12, 13, and 15. It is believed that the amended claims now specifically set forth each element of Applicant's invention in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 2-4, 6-8, and 11-16 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicant's amended claim 2 comprises a combination of original claims 1 and 2, thus redrafting claim 2 in independent form. Original claims 3 and 4 depend from amended claim 2. Applicant's amended claim 6 comprises a combination of original claims 1, 5 and 6, thus redrafting claim 6 in independent form. Original claims 7 and 8 depend from amended claim 6. Applicant's amended claim 11 comprises a combination of original claims 1, 9, and 11, thus redrafting claim 11 in independent form. Applicant's amended claim 12 comprises a combination of original claims 1, 9, and 12, thus redrafting claim 12 in independent form. Applicant's amended claim 13 comprises a combination of

original claims 1 and 13, thus redrafting claim 13 in independent form. Original claim 14 depends from amended claim 13. Applicant's amended claim 15 comprises a combination of original claims 1 and 15, thus redrafting claim 15 in independent form. Original claim 16 depends from amended claim 15. In the absence of any art cited against Applicant's original claims 2, 6, 11, 12, 13, and 15, it is not believed that any detailed discussion of the cited prior art references is necessary. Suffice to say that all of the claims remaining in this patent application contain subject matter against which no prior art citations have been made.

Summary

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that this application is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner not be of the opinion that this case is in condition for allowance, it is requested that this amendment be entered for the purposes of appeal, since it materially reduces the issues on appeal by cancelling claims 1, 5, 9 and 10, thereby rendering moot the outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102, and 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Should any points remain in issue, which the Examiner feels could best be resolved by either a personal or a telephone interview, it is urged that Applicant's local attorney be contacted at the exchange listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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